

Disability Awareness Month

BANK RECEIPTS/POSTAL INDICIA CAMPAIGN

You can reach many community residents by placing Disability Awareness Month messages on bank receipts, credit card or checking/savings statements, and utility and/or corporate mailing indicia. Most people visit the bank at some time or another, and everyone receives utility or other types of bills that can display the Awareness Month message. The enclosed timeline will assist you as you make plans to place Awareness Month messages.

Making Contact

First, check your local phone book to gather bank names and addresses, as well as names of local corporations you want to contact. When making “cold” calls to people you do not know, be friendly but confident. Let your contact know who you are and/or the organization you represent. It might be appropriate to give him or her background information on disabilities. Be sure to inform your contacts that people with disabilities are being celebrated nationally and locally. When you ask the bank or corporate representative to place an awareness message, also mention any other activities you have planned for March.

If you live in a small town, you might already know the manager(s) of the local bank(s) or corporation(s). If so, visit him or her in person to discuss your plans and ideas. If not, you should ask for the public relations or public affairs director. More than likely, the person you need to speak with will fall under one of these titles.

Some banks and corporations might prohibit messages on their receipts and/or indicia. You can check a recent receipt from your bank and any bills or mail you have received from local corporations to see if messages do appear, but it is still a good idea to call and ask. It could be that the bank or corporation has never considered printing a community service message on its receipts or indicia.

Suggested Messages

Once your contacts agree to display the Awareness Month message, they will probably inform you that the message must be concise because there is not much room. Most bank receipts can carry no more than three to four short lines of type, and postal indicia have an even smaller area. If the Disability Awareness Month theme fits, you should use it for your message. Otherwise, it is recommended that you simply use the phrase “Celebrate Disability Awareness Month.” You might want to “localize” your message by including your organization’s phone number. Make sure your organization is prepared to handle calls and questions.

Lead Planning Time

Calls should be made as soon as possible to reserve your space and to allow for production time of the message. Banks and corporations might work months in advance on determining which message they will run. Clarify how long the message will run – the entire month, two weeks, etc. Be sure to send a confirmation letter to all banks and/or corporations who agree to print the message. (See sample)

Your Organization’s Indicia

If your organization uses a postage meter machine and sends out a large quantity of mail, you should consider running a message, too. The cost to create the stamp for indicia is relatively low. You might try your phone book first, and if there is no listing for postage meter distributors there, call your local postmaster at the post office to see who produces such messages.

The company producing the indicia stamp might request “camera-ready art” of your message. You can have your message typeset at any quick print shops, as well as typesetting businesses. Ask the typesetter to draw borders of the indicia area, which may be $\frac{3}{4}$ ” tall by $1\frac{3}{4}$ ” wide according to U.S. postal requirements; check with your local post office.

If you have an indicia stamp produced for your own use, consider having several made at that time. This way you can supply the bank or other corporations with the stamp, and they will only need to reserve March for the message.

Follow Up

The bank and/or corporation will certainly appreciate your recognizing their efforts to assist in increasing public awareness of the abilities of people with disabilities. You might want to consider presenting a gift, (i.e., plaque, certificate) they can display in their lobby or reception area as a token of your appreciation.

If you do not have the funds to purchase a gift, send a written thank you. Either way, be sure to acknowledge their donation of time, money and space to your cause. (See the enclosed sample thank-you letter.)

Note: The Governor's Planning Council has certificates available to recognize individuals. To order, please contact Kim Dennison at (317) 631-6400 (voice), (317) 631-6499 (fax) or kdennison@bjmpr.com (e-mail).

(Sample Confirmation Letter)

(Date)

(Mr. John Doe)
(Title)
(XYZ Bank/Corporation)
(123 Main Street)
(Anytown, Indiana 46000)

Dear (Mr. Doe):

I enjoyed talking with you today about reserving a message for (XYZ Bank/Corporation's) mailing indicia/receipts during Disability Awareness Month in March.

Our recommended message is "Celebrate Disability Awareness Month." Enclosed is a stamp carrying that message. Please notify me at (123-4567) if you have any questions.

The (Anytown Support Group for People with Disabilities) appreciates the opportunity to present its message about disabilities to the public through (XYZ Bank/Corporation).

Thanks again, and I'll be in touch.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)
(Title)

Enclosure

(Sample Thank You Letter)

(Date)

(Mr. John Doe)
(Title)
(XYZ Bank/Corporation)
(123 Main Street)
(Anytown, Indiana 46000)

Dear (Mr. Doe):

Thank you very much for using the Disability Awareness Month message on your postal indicia during March. It's exciting to know that more than (1,000) people in our area received mail bearing the important message.

Our goal is to increase awareness in the community of people with disabilities as people with abilities. Through your generous efforts we've made strides toward that goal.

Thanks again for your help. You've done a great community service for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)
(Title)

Enclosure

BANK RECEIPTS/INDICIA CAMPAIGN TIMELINE CHECKLIST

** This timeline checklist should be adjusted to your specific planning timeframe.

Early January

- _____ Begin making calls to your local banks and/or corporations to ask about placing an Awareness Month message.
- _____ Research how to have your own indicia message produced. Determine funding.
- _____ If appropriate, set up a meeting with the bank/corporation representative to present the message.
- _____ Once the bank or corporation has agreed to use the Awareness Month message, send a written confirmation letter to your contact.

Early February

- _____ If your organization is having the stamp produced, mail stamp(s) to bank/corporations.
- _____ Determine if you are purchasing a plaque or other gift for the bank/corporation.

After March:

- _____ Present the bank/corporation with the plaque or other gift.
- _____ Send thank you letter(s) to appropriate contacts.